l: Karsten--460-461 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 765 (1928-29)

"That a death gives rise to many taboos is natural. We have already seen how the clothes and certain other objects which have been in con-[461] tact with the dead are destroyed and made to disappear. The same may be said of the mourners themselves, who are so closely related to the very source of this mysterious defilement. Thus the nearest relatives have to restrict their diet for some days; they are forbidden to eat mani or earth-nuts, pork and hen's flesh, as well as salt and Indian pepper; they cannot chew sugar-cane, nor eat a dish of boiled and mashed manioc called sumbi; manioc-beer, on the other hand, they are allowed to drink. Instead of eating the flesh of domestic animals they may eat any kind of game. When four days have passed they may eat hen's flesh, and after six days they are allowed to eat everything. For six days they must also abstain from sexual intercourse. Any infringement of these rules is likely to endanger the other relatives; they may fall ill and die themselves, since the evil spirit who took the life of their relative may also take theirs."

2: Stirling--114 (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 775, 765

"The Jivaros believe that after death they are reborn in various forms of animal life. A warlike curaka becomes a jaguar when he dies and goes to live in the forest near enemy tribes in order that he may continue his vengeance toward them. The explanation of the 2-year period during which the corpse is fed and tended is that it requires 2 years for a jaguar to develop to the point where he can competently shift for himself. When this time has expired the bones are taken down and buried."

2: Stirling--114-115 (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 765

"Mourning customs are not very elaborate. During the 6 days following death the women of the house wail and lament and, if the deceased were a married man, his wives cut their hair in the form of a bob. During the time that a corpse is suspended in the house the men generally leave, going into the bush, or visiting some other jivaría, leaving the mourning and the tending of the body [115] to the women. There are evidences of a lasting affection for the dead on the part of close relatives, and mothers sometimes retain keepsakes which they treasure in true sentimental fashion as remembrances of their dead sons."

12: Rivet--609 [2] (no date) 1907 Jívaro
116, 765, 428

Property is transmitted from male to male (1), generally from father to son. When the husband dies, the wives of the deceased take off all their ornaments, cut their hair, and stop painting their faces and body, as a sign of mourning. In a word, they renounce all elegance. (2) It is not true, nowadays at least, that the favorite wife follows the head of the family to the grave.

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1. Lubbock. op. cit., page 31.
2. Coleccion de cartas etc. op. cit., page 61.

25: Vigna--48 [3] (no date) 1945 Jivaro
116, 765

When the first husband dies, the wife, as a sign of mourning, cuts off her hair completely; if the deceased is the second husband, the hair is cut to the nape of the neck. The men also, by custom, cut a little off the ends of their braids.

They cry for several days over the grave. The weeping almost assumes the solemnity of a rite, and relatives often are invited. For a certain period of time, various foods are placed over the grave: chicha, meat, banana, yuca, etc. When the time has passed, the woman, recollecting her dead may, at any unexpected moment, weep copiously.

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INTRODUCTION

Only one tribe of American Indians is known ever to have successfully revolted against the empire of Spain and to have thwarted all subsequent attempts by the Spaniards to reconquer them: the Jívaro (hee'-va-ro), the *untsuri huara* of eastern Ecuador. From 1599 onward they remained unconquered in their forest fastness east of the Andes, despite the fact that they were known to occupy one of the richest placer gold deposit regions in all of South America.

Tales of their fierceness became part of the folklore of Latin America, and their warlike reputation spread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Jívaro "shrunken head" trophies, *tsantsa*, found their way to the markets of exotica in the Western world. As occasional travelers visited them in the first decades of this century, the Jívaro also became known not as just a warlike group, but as an individualistic people intensely jealous of their freedom and unwilling to be subservient to authority, even among themselves. It was this quality that particularly attracted me when I went to study their way of life in 1956–57 and I was most fortunate, at that time, to find, especially east of the Cordillera de Cutucú, a portion of the Jívaro still unconquered and still living, with some changes, their traditional life style. This book is about their culture.

A factor that contributed to my decision to do fieldwork among the Jívaro was the incredible volume of contradictory and often obviously unreliable information on their culture.

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expeditions entered the region from the Andean highlands, but several ended disastrously and none of them resulted in permanent colonization.[21] One of the few "friendly" gestures reported for the tribe during this time occurred in 1767, when they gave a Spanish missionizing expedition "gifts," which included the skulls of Spaniards who had apparently been killed earlier by the Jívaro.[22]

Interestingly, the present-day Jívaro seem to have no memory of their uprising of 1599. The only oral tradition that I was able to obtain which apparently concerned the Spaniards was this, from one of my oldest informants:

> A very long time ago there were the *ai apaĭ* ["*ai*" white men]. They were many. They were all of bone to their elbows and to their knees. They could move their arms and legs only beyond their elbows and knees. They had shirts and pants. They were fierce and tall. There were many, many of them, and they had women and children. All were the same in not being able to move except for their forearms and lower legs. They didn't have hats, but were something like the helmets of the [present-day Ecuadorian] soldiers. These men had machetes of iron that they used for killing. They carried their machetes on the left hip. The machetes were somewhat yellow. These machetes had handles of human bone. They said that they had killed many whites with their machetes. They also had shoes. These whites had *wa'a* . . . they rode on top of these. I think these must have been horses. The *Iisanĭ* were scared of them. These whites also had *nuaa*. I do not know what they were.

The informant explained that the bone extending to the knees and elbows of the *ai apaĭ* was something like the shell of a turtle. It seems evident that he was recounting a tradition concerning men in armor and helmets and carrying swords. Since they had shoes, the informant discounted the

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machetes, two hatchets, and cloth. Following this, the Macabeos returned the visit of the Jíbaro.

With this initiation of trade relations between the two groups, Jívaro families soon migrated north from the Río Pastaza Valley to settle in the previously uninhabited land between the Río Pastaza and Macas. These migrants began to act as middlemen in the barter of Jívaro products for steel machetes and other goods. The Macabeos at first traded mainly to secure pigs and salt obtained by the Jívaro from saline springs, but soon also began to attend *tsantsa* celebrations to purchase land obtained from pigs slaughtered by the Jívaro on such occasions. As a consequence of their attendance at the feasts, the Macabeos started also to purchase *tsantsa*.[25] This was the beginning of the "shrunken head" trade, and the first reported examples of *tsantsa* reached the outside world at about this time.[26]

Macas remained the only significant source of Western-manufactured goods for the Jívaro until 1870. In that year, the Jesuits founded new missions at Macas and Gualaquiza, to the south on the Río Zamora.[27] The Jesuit missionaries introduced the first cattle to Macas at this time, Macabeo men carrying calves and guinea grass (*gramalote* in Spanish) [illegible] on their backs down the long trail from Riobamba. Both cattle and the grass flourished, and soon the Macabeos had a plentiful supply of beef, with the result that a gradual decline occurred in the trade with the Jívaro for pigs. Being unable to barter pigs any longer to obtain steel tools and other trade goods, the Jívaro began to engage in labor, such as clearing forest for pastures, for the people of Macas.

The Jesuits were shortly forced to withdraw from Gualaquiza and Macas due to political reasons, but they left behind them at Gualaquiza a few mestizos who constituted the first

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be unprotected from rain and possible attackers, a large floor area is essential. A large house also makes it possible for neighboring relatives to congregate in the dwelling to make a combined stand against an expected enemy attack. Space needs are, in addition, particularly great when a *tsantsa* feast is given, since large numbers of guests dance and sleep within the house on such occasions. Under such circumstances, extra beds are built to line the walls.

The Jívaro divide the house conceptually and functionally into two halves: the men's end (*tayamaša*), and the women's (*ekenta*). The men's half serves as a parlor and sleeping place for visitors. A couple of stools and a log door post or two serving as a bench are usually found in this end for the host and his visitors (Figure 1, H, E, F_2). The house owner's personal palm or bamboo slat bed is also located in the men's end (Figure 1, G) and, when there are visitors, is slept on by those male guests unaccompanied by wives. Sometimes, if there is not enough bed space, visitors will sleep on banana leaves spread on the dirt floor in the men's end of the house.

When there are no guests, the house owner uses the bed for his daytime napping, and for nighttime sleeping alone when his wife is menstruating or angry with him. Otherwise he sleeps with his wife on her bed in the women's half of the house. If he has more than one wife, there is a bed for each (Figure 1, J, C). Often an extra bed or two is also installed on the women's side for married couples who are visiting, or for a daughter and her husband during the period of temporary matrilocal residence within the house (Figure 1, D). Such beds are also utilized by children who no longer sleep on their mother's bed. Split bamboo (*Guadua* sp.) shelves are suspended in the women's end between the center posts (Figure 1, M) and palm slat or split bamboo shelves (Figure 1, I) along the walls. These are used to store pottery and baskets of pea-

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of insects and fruits, shoots and leaves constitute the main kinds of gathered foods. 222

Insects particularly are relished as food items, both in larval and mature forms. The rotten cores of fallen chonta palms are cut open to collect cocoons of two kinds of edible grubs (*wukintu*, *ẽarɨ̃cam*), and the ivory nut palm often yields larvae of a large moth (*wampan*). Cocoons containing grubs of the butterfly *tampirulă* are removed from hanging vines. Leaf-eating ants (*aiyapu*) and a kind of grasshopper (*tsampumă*) also are collected. [261]

The various species of palms are the most important source of wild plant food. The chonta (*Guilielma utilis*), royal, and other palms (*kipak*, *kuakui*, *ampakui*, *tirintă*) are chopped down with machetes to obtain their edible tips. Except for the *ampakui*, these palms (together with the ivory nut palm and *kumai*) also supply an annual harvest of large clusters of edible fruits, which are both eaten boiled and made into beer. Frequently young tender leaves are collected from other plants (*tsuasi*, *ruĉinĉ*, *ipiu*, *wamar*), but no wild roots are dug up for food. Generally, the only tool used in all these gathering activities is the machete. [262] [252] [293] [262]

Virtually all families raise chickens, some also raise ducks, and a very few keep pigs. A household's pigs are allowed to wander relatively freely in the adjacent forest to feed. If they start rooting in the garden, a low rail fence may be built around it to keep them out. Neighbors' pigs never seem to threaten the garden, because of the long distances between houses and the small numbers of pigs kept. 231 [235] [417]

Chickens, ducks, and their eggs are utilized for food, especially to feed visitors when no game is on hand. In the uncommon cases where pigs are kept, the family usually is planning a *tsuntsa* feast and intends to slaughter the pigs to 262 574 765 • [235] [231]

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feed the large number of anticipated guests, who could not be supplied with enough meat from hunting alone. Normally, however, the contribution of the animal domesticates, essentially fowl, is less than 5 per cent of the diet.

At least one or two dogs are kept in most households. These not only aid in hunting in the forest, as mentioned earlier, but also protect the garden crops, including the manioc tubers, from devastation by agouti and other rodents. A family without a good hunting dog lives in fear of losing much of its garden produce within a few months. An equally important service that they provide is to act as watchdogs against surprise attacks. Leashed to beds in the women's end of the house (see Plate 11), their slightest barking usually results in the household head seizing his gun and preparing to defend himself and his family. Since the dogs' barking indicates that the intended victim has been alerted, the attacking party generally withdraws. Interestingly, the name for dog, *misiu*, is the same term used to designate the feared and respected jaguar.

The importance of dogs in hunting, protecting the garden, and defense helps to explain the high degree of care they receive. When puppies are born, one of the owner's wives observes a kind of couvade, in which she lies abed with the bitch to protect the litter from supernatural harm. A puppy is nursed by the wife as well as by its canine mother. Even in adult life, the dog normally sleeps on the bed beside its owners, and is fed premasticated manioc in a special wooden dish. Dogs, like people, are even given the hallucinogenic *Datura* to help them obtain supernatural power.

The majority of households contain at least one pet besides the dog. Such pets, which include monkeys, marmosets, parakeets, parrots, macaws, and doves, are captured and

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21. Three excellent examples of *tsantsa* (shrunken head trophies). The long cotton strings dangling from the mouths are put on only at the time of the third and last *tsantsa* feast (photo courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History).

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/p. 138-F/

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ing soul is created and leaves his corpse through the mouth.[10] If one simply dies of contagious disease or of old age (the latter believed by the Jivaro to be a rare occurrence), no *nuisak* is created.

The sole reason for existence of a person's *nuisak* is to avenge his death. This soul therefore attempts to kill the murderer, or if this is not possible (due to the murderer having an *arutam* soul), a son or wife of the murderer. The *nuisak* is occasionally distracted from this objective, out of jealousy, to kill instead a new spouse of his widow. Because of this latter danger, young men who have not yet acquired much *arutam* power tend to avoid marrying widows.

Technically, the avenging soul is only called a *nuisak* while it is in the corpse, subsequently in the shrunken head trophy (*tsantsa*), or its immediate vicinity. When the human head trophy is not taken and prepared, the *nuisak* is able to travel as far as it likes from the corpse and to form into one of the three types of *iwanchi*, or demons. These three demons are forms of the natural non-human world that can kill a man. One is a particularly dangerous poisonous snake (*matsamtsi*). Another is the water boa constrictor or anaconda (*pesa*), which can knock over the raft or canoe of the murderer and thereby cause him to drown in the rapid waters of one of the numerous fast-flowing rivers and streams of this hilly country. The third form is a large tree in the forest, which falls on the victim and crushes him. These are the three traditional forms of death in Jivaro society that might be called "accidental" in other cultures. Since the introduction of the machete and of firearms, a belief has been growing that a *nuisak* can enter into these items to cause an "accidental" fatal wound. The Jivaro view slight, self-inflicted wounds as true accidents, but grave or fatal self-inflicted wounds are always believed to be the results, respectively, of murder attempts or murders through supernatural mechanisms.

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Before the avenging spirit, or *iwanči*, kills the murderer, it sometimes appears to him in the form of a man or a jaguar while he is sleeping. The sleeper tries to seize his firearm or lance (which he keeps on the bed beside him at night) to kill the apparition. Failure to do so will result in the demon eventually succeeding in killing the person. Sometimes this *iwanči* fails in its assassination attempt, only wounding or injuring the intended victim. In such cases, the victim becomes a permanent invalid.

When the demon has performed its act of vengeance, it then appears in a dream to a relative of the victim. In this dream the avenging soul has a human form. Around its neck hangs the shrunken head trophy worn by a killer in the *tsantsa* feast. The demon tells the dreamer, "I have killed an enemy. Now I am going far away, where my relatives are. I am going far away to have a feast with them." The demon disappears and, since it never kills more than a single person, will never murder again.

The widely publicized practice of the Jivaro in shrinking human heads can be well understood only with a knowledge of the *muisak* concept. A major part of the belief and ritual associated with the *tsantsa* is a direct effort to thwart the *muisak* in its mission of vengeance.[11] The Jivaro believe that the completion of the process of headshrinking forces the *muisak*, hovering alongside the retreating war expedition, to enter the head trophy. For this reason, as well as the practical ones that the head would decay if not processed in some way and that the removal of the skull and its contents makes the trophy much lighter to carry on the mountainous trails, the expedition prepares its *tsantsa*(s) as quickly as possible while fleeing the enemy territory. One of the steps in the processing of the shrunken head is to rub charcoal into its skin "so that the *muisak* cannot see out," thereby

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making it difficult for the avenging soul to plan an "accidental" death in the vicinity of the *tsantsa*.

When the expedition arrives in its home territory, the first feast of the *tsantsa* is held immediately, later followed by at least one and sometimes two others. At all these feasts or dances great care is taken to prevent arguments and fights between the inebriated celebrants out of fear that the *wuisak* might take advantage of such an interruption of the magically binding ritual and slip from the head trophy, causing a quarrel to result in a murder. If the feasts are conducted properly, however, the *wuisak* will be kept inside of the *tsantsa* until the end of the last feast. At that time, the celebrants expel it from the head trophy and send it back to its neighborhood of origin. This neighborhood is typically at a considerable distance, because head trophies are normally taken only of members of other tribes. As part of this final ritual the women sing:

> Now, now, go back to your house where you lived.
> Your wife is there calling you from your house.
> You have come here to make us happy.
> Finally we have finished.
> So return.

The *tsantsa* is commonly later sold by the head-taker (although illegally in terms of Ecuadorian law) to a mestizo in one of the communities on the western periphery of the tribal territory. At that time, the head-taker silently repeats the exhortation to the *wuisak* to return to its distant neighborhood as he hands the *tsantsa* over to the trader. The head-taker goes through this act just in case there is a possibility that the ritual in the *tsantsa* feast did not succeed in its purpose.

During the three feasts the celebrants are concerned with utilizing the power of the *wuisak* as well as containing it. As

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in the case of the *arutam* soul, the *wakani* emits power, but it is believed that the *wakani*'s power is directly transmissible to other persons. The man who took the head holds the *tsantsa* aloft in the ritual dance while two female relatives whom he wishes to benefit, most frequently a wife and sister, hold on to him. In this manner the power of the *wakani* is believed to be transmitted to the women, who, ordinarily, lack power-giving *arutam* souls. This power, transmitted from the *wakani* to the women through the "filtering" mechanism of the head-taker, is believed to make it possible for them to work harder and to be more successful in crop production and in the raising of domesticated animals, both of which are primarily the responsibilities of women in Jivaro society.

In addition to the regular head trophy obtained through inter-tribal raiding, there is another kind of *tsantsa* which may, on rare occasions, be made of an *untsuri shuar* intra-tribal assassination victim, provided he belongs to a neighborhood which is consistently hostile to, or very distant from, one's own. To make this *tsantsa*, the killer simply pulls out some of the victim's hair from his head, rather than decapitating him. The hair is loose, not in the form of a scalp, and is then stuck with beeswax onto the top of a tree gourd which has had the bottom cut off. The beeswax, which is naturally black, is also used to model eyes, a nose and mouth, and ears on the surface of the calabash. Chonta palm splinters are put through the beeswax lips and a doubled *kumai* bark string is inserted through a hole in the top of the gourd so that the killer may carry it hanging from his neck.

This trophy is used for the regular three feasts, it being believed that the dead enemy's *wakani* is in it because his hair is there. The advantage of this kind of *tsantsa*, according to informants, is that they can make it without getting the blood of members of their own tribe on themselves. It is

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recognized that making a full-fledged *tsantsa* would be more insulting to the victim's relatives and neighbors and thus more likely to bring large-scale retaliation. Because of the same fear of serious retribution, heads almost never seem to be taken of whites, but several instances are known in which the "hair" *tsantsa* was made from white victims. The Jivaro are frankly uncertain, however, whether whites have *arutam* souls and *muisak*, and it appears that their primary motivation in such cases is to celebrate the killing of whites.

Tsantsa feasts are also held using the shrunken head of a tree sloth. The tree sloth is the only non-human creature thought to be capable of forming a *muisak*. Because the tree sloth moves so slowly, it is said to be very aged and therefore must once have acquired an *arutam* soul to have lived so long. At the same time, since the sloth moves in such a slow manner, it is further believed to have lost its former *arutam* soul(s) and therefore can be killed. The feasting and ritual procautions are basically the same as in the case of a human *tsantsa* but generally somewhat less extensive. The *muisak* of the sloth is believed capable of becoming only a single avenging form, a falling tree.

Sometimes a man who has personally killed someone on an inter-tribal raid has been unable to remove his victim's head before retreating. Under such circumstances, the killer cannot be a full, dancing participant in the first *tsantsa* celebration, but can borrow a *tsantsa* from someone who killed on a previous raid in order to host the two subsequent feasts. Through ritual procedure, the *muisak* of the new victim is believed to be made to enter the old *tsantsa*, and these two *tsantsa* celebrations are called "demon feasts" (*tsuntí nampet*) in recognition of the presence of the avenging soul of the victim even though a substitute head is being used. Occasionally, a tree sloth *tsantsa* may be used to perform the

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766 laid above it to protect the pottery cover from being crushed by persons walking above.

764 The bodies of deceased older children and wives are also buried in the house floor, although not in urns. A body is interred on its back and extended, with the arms at the sides, and wrapped in sections of split guadua bamboo. More split bamboo is laid on top before the earth is added. Graves are usually only about two-and-a-half to three feet deep, one man explaining, "When we live, we do not live far away from the surface of the earth, so when we are dead, we should not, either."

768 When the house owner dies, the dwelling is abandoned and his wife (wives) and children will go or be taken to live with other relatives, such as a potential husband (*yai*) of the deceased) or a son-in-law, until she remarries. She cuts her • 765 hair short as a sign of mourning, and ideally should not take a new husband until the hair has grown back down to her shoulders. Since the house will no longer be used, the deceased 766 head of the household may be buried either below ground or [769] above it on a low scaffold. In the latter case, a large balsa log is hollowed out in a manner somewhat similar to a canoe, from which it takes its name (*kanu*), although canoes are not actually used for this purpose. The corpse is laid inside and the coffin top is covered with lashed-down bark from the same log. Finally, the log is placed on crossbars so that it is between, and in line with, the two main center posts of the house, with the head towards the doorway of the women's end of the dwelling. A grave is in the same location. If several persons in a household die simultaneously in an epidemic and, as a result, the house is abandoned, they may all receive a scaffold burial.

764 Whether buried above or below ground, a man's corpse 766 is dressed in a new kit, adorned with his glass bead necklaces,

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and two black streaks are painted under his eyes. The body is wrapped in a woman's dress, the largest cloth available. A palm-wood fighting lance is laid parallel to his body on the surface of the ground, and on the ground adjacent to the burial is placed the man's round stool. From a house beam overhead is suspended his monkey skin traveling bag containing his combs, ornamental earsticks, and knife or machete blade fragment.

If the deceased male still had a *tsantsa* in his possession, it is interred with him, under his back. Conversely, if he himself was the victim of a head-taking raid, his corpse is buried in the usual way.

A woman is buried in her finest dress and wearing her snail shell dance belt, glass bead necklaces, toucan feather earrings, and an ornamental stick in her lower lip. Her pottery-making tools and beer strainer are placed on the ground near her head, and one of her carrying baskets, containing personal effects, such as her comb and perfume bundle, is hung from a house beam above.

A large basket of cooked manioc and meat is left hanging above the head of the deceased, whether male or female, and a bowl of manioc beer is placed on the ground. The food and beer are replaced daily for about a week, after which it is believed that the *nekás wakani*, the true soul, has normally departed. However, if one of the survivors subsequently has a bad dream in which the deceased appears and complains of not being fed, the food and beer containers are hastily replenished.

Occasionally, an elderly, outstanding *untsa* with renown as a killer may, on his deathbed, advise one or more sons that he wants them each to acquire one of his own *arutam* souls, which form at his death. When he dies, his corpse is entombed in a special way. It is seated on his round stool, leaning

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721 killing of a specific individual in the same tribe which characterizes feuding. A less emphasized war objective is to capture women. No case could be found of war being pursued to seize territory.

628 721 765 There is a "gray" area in which the patterns of feuding and war overlap to a limited degree. This seems to be a reflection of such factors as the absence of a tribal political structure, the intermittent escalation of intra-tribal feuding, and the relative isolation of many neighborhoods from one another. Thus, while full-fledged head-taking raids are only launched against other groups "that speak differently," i.e., have different dialects or languages, such as the Achuara, the assassination of a man belonging to a very distant neighborhood within the tribe may be followed occasionally by the taking of his head or by taking hair from his head to make a *tsantsa* with a tree gourd (see pp. 147–48). The latter type of *tsantsa* may also be made with the hair of a victim from a closer neighborhood provided that enmity towards its population is extremely strong in the killer's own locality.

[727] [825]

726 701 727 554 624 A war or head-taking raid is organized by a man who is a *kakaram*, and who has previously killed at least three or four persons.[2] When the *kakaram* decides to lead a raid, he asks an *untsi* of his neighborhood, ideally a respected, elderly man who has also killed at least several times, to be the *wea*, or master of ceremonies, for the first celebration when the raiding party returns. If he agrees, the *kakaram* and some of the expected participants in the expedition build the *wea* a new, large house for the feast, the construction work usually taking some months.

[796] [342]

726 702 When the house is finished, and about two weeks before the planned expedition, the organizer sends spies to the Achuara neighborhood he plans to attack in order to select the most likely house(s) for assault. Then he sends a son or son-in-law

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727 ney, reached their home neighborhood. However, most wife-
583 seizing among the Jívaro is intra-, rather than inter-tribal in form, and is often justified on the basis of supposed levirate rights and romantic involvement.

727 Although obtaining heads is the primary object of the expedition, the successful attackers also lose the houses of such valuables as blowguns, dart-poison, dogs, beads, machetes, steel axes, featherwork, and other ornaments.

Tsantsa *Celebrations*

727 As they retreat homeward, the head-takers (*tsaŋrame*)
• 765 shrink the skins peeled from the heads. Since the withdrawal
778 from the enemy region is made with haste, in order to avoid being overtaken by an avenging group of Achuara, the preparation of the head skins is done intermittently during the infrequent stops on the return.

The process of preparing the *tsantsa* involves a number of steps. With the aid of a machete or steel knife, the victim's skin is peeled back from the uppermost part of his chest, shoulders and back, and the head and neck are cut off as close
[301] as possible to the collarbone. The killer removes his own woven headband or *etsemat* and passes it through the mouth and neck of the head and ties it over his shoulder to facilitate
[824] his rapid retreat from the victim's neighborhood. If he has no *etsemat*, he may use a section of *činčipi* vine instead.

Eventually, the head-taker and his companions reach a spot beside a river where they had cached one or more pottery
[776] cooking jars and food dishes. Here he makes a slit up the rear
[782] of the head, carefully cuts the skin from the skull, and throws the latter into the river "as a gift for *paŋi*," the anaconda. The skin is boiled in plain water (there are no "secret" vegetal

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additives) for no more than about half an hour (otherwise "the hair would fall out"). The skin, already reduced perhaps by half, is lifted out with a stick which is then thrust into the ground so that the trophy will dry. Then the skin is turned inside out and all the flesh adhering to it is scraped off with a knife. The scraped skin is turned right side out and the slit in the rear is sewn together with string made from the inner bark of the *kawai* palm. A vine is also sewn around the inside of the base of the neck and the lips are tied with the same kind of string.

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Five or six stones about two inches in diameter are heated in the fire. Each, in turn, is lifted with a four-pronged stick into the "sack" formed by the head skin and rolled around inside. When the stone cools, the head-taker grasps the *tsantsa* by the hair in order to turn it over to drop the stone back into the fire. When the skin is too small for pebbles to be rolled around in it, sand is heated in the food bowl and substituted for the pebbles, the inverted *tsantsa* being covered with a large leaf to keep in the heat. Periodically, the head-taker massages the skin to help the drying process and to affect the shape. The vine around the base of the neck is gradually drawn in closer so that the neck will become reduced in proportion to the head. After about an hour of this additional work with the heated sand, the expedition resumes its running trip homeward, stopping every afternoon for about two or three hours to continue the hot sand treatment of the skins. In addition, a machete is heated red-hot and pressed against the lips to dry them. Then three chonta palm pins are put through the lips and are laced together with string of the *kawai* inner bark. The skin is also rubbed daily with finely powdered balsa wood charcoal so that it will become blackened and thus prevent the *wakani* of the murdered man from seeing out (see pp. 143–46). A large, hard red seed

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532 sometimes is also placed under each eyelid, filling any slight
• 765 apertures which may remain.
727 A total of approximately six days of such intermittent prep-
778 aration is normally involved in the preparation of the *tsantsa*
[796] until it is its final size, slightly larger than a man's fist. The last day of work on the trophy is usually spent in the forest within a few hours' walk from the neighborhood where the first *tsantsa* celebration or feast will take place. So that the head-taker will be able to hang the *tsantsa* from his neck in the celebration, a hole is made in the top of the head and a doubled vegetal bark string is inserted and tied to a short stick of chonta palm on the inside.

727 When the war party arrives at the neighborhood from
624 which they departed, they do not go directly to the *tsuk*'s
796 house but rather to the home of a nearby neighbor. A young
[554] man is sent to advise the *tsuk* that "now we are coming with
[342] victory of dried fish," alluding to the heads of the Achuara. The *tsuk* then sends him and others to inform households in his own and adjacent neighborhoods of the victory and to tell them to come in two days to attend the first *tsantsa* celebration (*nampet*) which is held at the newly built house of the *tsuk*.

The *tsuk* also immediately goes to visit the war party
[765] at the neighbor's house. Each head-taker holds up his *tsantsa*, wrapped in cloth "to keep the hair in place," for inspection by the *tsuk*, who parts the fabric, bends down and smells each one, saying, "It is delicious fish. It has an excellent smell." After having thus inspected the results of the raid, the *tsuk* returns home. In two days, the war party follows, is joined at the *tsuk*'s house by their relatives and neighbors, and all participate together in a brief, two-day, version of the *tsantsa* celebration (see pp. 146–47 for the basic religious ideas involved in this and the subsequent feasts).

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When this first *tsantsa* feast is concluded, the head-takers return to their separate homes and begin to make preparations for the two subsequent feasts which each of them will host individually. Since enormous quantities of beer and food are consumed at these celebrations, the head-taker normally has to clear additional garden space for his wife or wives to plant to ensure an ample supply of manioc. The first of these two celebrations, named *suamak*, normally takes place no sooner than after a year, to allow time for garden clearing and the growth of a large mature crop of manioc as well as for the raising of pigs to help provide meat for the feasting. Also the host may delay the celebration in order to build a new, larger house more worthy of the occasion. Thus, often two or three years pass before a man gives the feast.

To ensure a large quantity of wild game for the feast, men who are close relatives of the host separately go hunting long distances from the house for a period of approximately nine or ten days before the opening day. Lacking any mnemonic system for keeping count of the days accurately, they are able to time their return to coincide with the arrival of the guests at the feast with the aid of an ingenious device which might be called a "banana clock." That is, the host gives each hunter a green cooking banana or plantain from the same stalk, which is one of those hanging in the house to ripen for the feast. When each of the hunters' plantains is almost fully ripe, they know that it is time to return for the celebration. The host also sends or delivers plantains from the same stalk to those invited guests living at some distance so that they, too, will arrive at the same time.

The celebration lasts five days and is followed, about a month later, by the third feast (*napiŋ*). This is the largest of all, with the head-taker supplying food and drink for six days. He must be able to provide plentifully for all his guests or the

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occasion would cause him to lose, rather than to gain, prestige. Guests at the feasts usually number up to about 125–150 persons, and mainly come from the local neighborhoods. Since these last two feasts, totaling eleven days of unremitted hospitality, must be supplied from the same harvest, often little food remains in the gardens at the end of the celebrations. Not uncommonly, the host and his family are forced onto a relatively meager diet for some months thereafter until the gardens can recover from their near-exhaustion. Sometimes such a large amount of the gardens' supply of manioc is consumed that the host is unable to follow the second feast with the third. There is no stigma attached to this, but it means that the *tsantsa* never undergoes its final modification.

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When, and if, all three feasts have been given, the chonta pins and palm-fiber string are removed from the mouth of the *tsantsa* and replaced with long white cotton strings (see Plate 21). The reason given for not using cotton strings during the shrinking stage is that they would have burned. The strings, two to each of the three lip holes, are intertwined near the mouth and dangle below as much as a yard, transected by three horizontal red bands of achiote paint. Often miniature ear ornaments of red and yellow toucan breast feathers are also hung from the ears at this time, the most correctly made examples having three such pendants from each lobe. In this finished form, the *tsantsa* may be kept as a decorative keepsake in the house for years. It may be worn by the head-taker on solitary, meditative walks in the forest, or in social dances at his house, and, if not eventually traded to the whites, it may finally be buried with him.[6]

[353] [301] [535] [439] [764]

The primary purpose of the *tsantsa* feast, from the Jivaro point of view, is not supernatural, although that is recognized by them as a secondary purpose; but is to acquire prestige, friendship, and obligations through being recognized as

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an accomplished warrior and, through the feasting, by being a generous host to as many neighbors as possible. One informant observed, "The desire of the Jivaro for heads is like the desire of the whites for gold."

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Since the head-taking raids are directed at the Achuara and others "who live far away," the victim whose head is the focal point of the celebration normally is viewed by everyone in the head-taker's neighborhood as an "enemy." Accordingly, it is the unique occasion for the members of many Jivaro households to get together to reaffirm their common identity and unity. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the *tsantsa* feast is participated in with great joy and a cumulative sense of euphoria. Of course, the huge quantities of strong manioc beer help, as do the ritual circle dances (*tsaindi*), which continue from dusk to dawn night after night. The bountiful quantities of meat and garden foods add to the sense of well-being. It is also a time of relative sexual license, as I had occasion to observe during the one *tsantsa* feast that I attended. Liaisons are arranged discreetly by both unmarried and married individuals, who rendezvous in the forest surrounding the house.

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The supernatural and ritual aspects of the celebration contribute to the sense of solidarity by inhibiting fights between men who have become drunk and who may try to even a score with old enemies or with men who have offended them at the feast by flirting with their wives. That is, it is believed that the avenging soul (*wuisak*) of the murdered man will be able to take advantage of any disruption of the binding ritual by escaping from the *tsantsa* to cause an ongoing fight to culminate in a death. Permitting the *wuisak* to escape from the *tsantsa* would also be an affront to the host, since it would negate the major supernatural purpose of the feast, that is, to utilize the power of the *wuisak*, while it is resident in the

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• 765 *tsantsa*, for increasing the power of women who are members
of the host's household. Therefore, any fight that erupts is
796 immediately stopped by the other male participants, led by
[774] the male master of ceremonies, the *uwa*, who usually has been
[778] selected for the role because of his considerable ritual knowl-
[554] edge and prestige. Fights between females at the feast, al-
[624] though less common, are similarly halted by the women, led
[562] by the female ceremonial leader, the *ishá*, who is selected on a
basis similar to that for the *uwa*. Thus the religious, ritual,
965 and social pressures of the occasion operate to make it the
796 safest, most euphoric, and largest social gathering known to
727 the Jivaro. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *tsantsa*
feasts tend to be viewed by the Jivaro as the pinnacles of
[619] their social lives. It is also expectable, given the ethos of kill-
[571] ing and counter-killing, that this, the greatest celebration,
[181] centers around the indisputable evidence of a triumph over a
[533] common enemy. The intimate interaction between the eupho-
[535] ria of the celebration and the awareness of the murdered
[539] enemy is illustrated by this *tsantsa* feast circle dance song:

Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
Cuwi[3] tells me
Cuwi tells me
We are going to greet the dawn playing.
Cuwi tells me
Cuwi tells me
We are going to greet the dawn.

And they taught me previously,
I cannot sleep easily.
And I will meet the dawn together with Cuwi.
And don't you sleep!
And don't you sleep!
For now it is dawning, for now it is dawning.

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000 [123] 2. The author has never participated in a war expedition, although he was invited to join one emanating from the Río Chiguaza region against the Achuara in 1956. The descriptions which follow, therefore, is based entirely on informants' accounts.

3. The chant is recorded in Harner, 1972.

171 439 197 • 765 532 727 998 [325] 4. The Jivaro, their Jivaroan neighbors, and the Candoshi are the only people within the past few centuries known to make the trophy. In addition, the Jivaro claim that the Achuara and the Huambisa learned the art from them in fairly recent times and formerly did not use all heads in war. The Candoshi, in turn, state that they learned the practice fairly recently from the Achuara and Huambisa (Wilson, 1965, pp. 37–40). During the earlier decades of the present century, the craft was practiced by unscrupulous entrepreneurs using the heads of unclaimed dead in Guayaquil and Peruana, which they passed off as Jivaro to tourists (see Karsten, 1935, pp. 6–8; Stirling, 1938, pp. 76–78, and Up de Graff, 1923, frontmatter, p. 184). Sometimes they were so far as to shrink the skins of entire bodies, a practice which, when I described it to Jivaro informants, was greeted with incredulity. The sale of shrunken heads is illegal in Ecuador and only imitations (although sometimes the sellers pretend they are real), made from monkey heads or the skins of other animals, now seem to be marketed.

000 [551] 5. Name of the victim. The victim's name is usually learned from captured women or from persons who have contacted with the Achuara in trade.

CHAPTER 10

[821] 1. The appearance of this comet is well remembered, and in fact informants recalled that in one neighborhood some Jivaro attempted to reach it by building a wooden tower!

[127] 2. Vasco Galindo, 1890, p. 452; Compte, 1881, p. 76, and oral histories recorded by the author.

3. *Head Hunters of the Amazon* by F. W. Up de Graff, 1923 (Dodd, Mead and Company).

4. The introduction of a few steel tools to the frontier Jivaro in the vicinity of Macas in the mid-nineteenth century may have increased garden size and production at that time, judging from oral traditions. However, oral information on events so far in the past is not included as evidence in this account of cultural change. A previous version of this material, with comparative data, appeared in Harner, 1968b.

EPILOGUE

[114] 1. I am indebted to Pedro Shiñes and Peter Hart for their assistance in obtaining some of the information contained in this section.